

Message Text

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20

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 EA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6368

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

CINCPAC UNN

AMEMBASSY DACCA

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL KHONGKONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PEKING

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USUN NEW YORK 664

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 3581

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, PARM, IN, IR, US, XO

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SUBJ: TEHRAN'S PERSPECTIVE ON US INDIAN OCEAN POLICY

REF: NEW DELHI 5616

1. WE SEE THE INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE ISSUE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENTLY THAN DESCRIBED IN REFTTEL, PERHAPS BECAUSE WE DO NOT REALLY HAVE A PROBLEM WITH IRAN ABOUT IT. WE WOULD AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN THAT US MISSIONS IN THE AREA OUGHT TO HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WASHINGTON'S BROAD STRATEGIC VIEW OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND HOW WE BELIEVE OUR MILITARY RESOURCES MIGHT BEST BE DEPLOYED TO INFLUENCE POLICY AND EVENTS AROUND THE INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL. WE ALSO AGREE THAT THERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS LITTORAL COUNTRIES MAY HAVE ABOUT OUR INDIAN OCEAN POLICY WHICH WE SHOULD MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO ANSWER. INDEED, IT SEEMS TO US THAT IT IS PRECISELY FOR THIS REASON THAT WE OUGHT TO EXAMINE VERY CAREFULLY THE UTILITY OF MAKING A "MAJOR STATEMENT" ABOUT OUR POLICY IN THE AREA. IT IS VERY DIFFICULT FOR US TO CONCEIVE OF ANY STATEMENT, HOWEVER CAREFULLY CRAFTED, WHICH WOULD SIMULTANEOUSLY CONVERT OUR ADVERSARIES AND CRITICS AND REASSURE OUR FRIENDS.

2. CERTAINLY IRAN AND PERHAPS OTHERS IN THE AREA WOULD BE UNEASY IF WE DEMONSTRATED CONVINCINGLY A WILLINGNESS TO DIMINISH OUR PRESENCE AND INTEREST IN THE AREA. THIS IS NOTWITHSTANDING THE FAVORABLE NOISES IRAN HAS MADE PUBLICLY ABOUT INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE. IN THEIR VIEW AND OURS, THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE CIRCUMSTANCE IN WHICH THIS MIGHT BE BROUGHT ABOUT WOULD BE A COMPARABLE DIMINUTION OF SOVIET ACTIVITY AND PRESENCE ON LAND AS WELL AS AT SEA AND INDIRECT AS WELL AS DIRECT. WE THINK THIS IS SOME CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE AWAY.

3. INSOFAR AS IT IS NECESSARY TO DEAL WITH THE IMAGE AS WELL AS THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR INDIAN OCEAN POLICY WITH LITTORAL COUNTRIES, WE BELIEVE IT CAN BEST BE PURSUED BILATERALLY. IN THE CASE OF IRAN, FOR EXAMPLE, WE MAY WANT OR EVEN NEED TO SAY RATHER MORE ABOUT WHAT WE ARE UP TO ON OCCASION IN ORDER TO INSURE ITS COOPERATION AND SUPPORT THAN WE WOULD TO OTHERS. THE SAME THING IS OBVIOUSLY TRUE OF THE BRITISH.

4. FOR YEARS THE INDIAN OCEAN WAS ON NOBODY'S AGENDA EXCEPT PERHAPS INDIA AND CEYLON. IT IS STILL NOT REALLY ON ANYONE'S AGENDA IN ANY SUBSTANTIVE SENSE UNLESS WE AND THE SOVIETS CHOOSE TO MAKE CONFIDENTIAL

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IT SO. IT IS OUR VIEW THAT WE OUGHT TO LEAVE IT THAT WAY FOR THE TIME BEING AND LET OUR DIPLOMATS AND AREA LEADERS CONCENTRATE ON THE REAL SUBSTANCE OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. CLOSE ATTENTION TO THESE MATTERS MIGHT WELL ILLUMINATE TO SOME, IF NOT ALL, THE DISADVANTAGES OF RIDING THE US ABOUT ITS INDIAN OCEAN POLICY-- WHATEVER IT MAY BE.

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